

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 065807

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, CCD, UK

SUBJECT: US-UK BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON ARMS CONTROL: SSOD

1. US AND UK (EDMONDS, FAKLEY) REPS MET FOR HOUR-LONG DIS-
CUSSION MARCH 14 ON UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT AS
PART OF 3-DAY ROUND OF TALKS ON ARMS CONTROL AND DIS-
ARMAMENT MATTERS.

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2. US REP OUTLINED OVERALL US APPROACH TO SSOD, RECALLING
THAT US HAS ADOPTED A POSITIVE POSTURE AND PLANNED TO TAKE
ACTIVE PART IN PREPARATORY PROCESS.

3. US REP SAID WE SAW VALUE IN WORKING TOWARD FINAL DOCU-
MENTS WHICH (A) WOULD PROVIDE BRIEF, GENERAL OVERVIEW OF
DISARMAMENT PROBLEM, AS PROPOSED BY NONALIGNED, INCLUDING

REVIEW OF PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS OVER PAST DECADE; (B) SET PRIORITIES BY DRAWING ATTENTION TO AREAS RIPE FOR EARLY ATTENTION; (C) ESTABLISH (OR RESTATE) GENERAL PRINCIPLES TO GOVERN ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS AND AGREEMENTS; (D) ASSESS CAPACITY OF CURRENT INSTITUTIONS TO HANDLE THESE TASKS; AND (E) HIGHLIGHT NEED FOR PROGRESS IN REGIONAL ARMS CONTROL ACTIVITIES.

4. ONE MEMBER FROM US SIDE POINTED OUT THAT TIME AND EFFORT SPENT ON DEVELOPING HISTORICAL REVIEW DOCUMENT MIGHT BE VIEWED BY SOME AS AN EFFORT ON PART OF WEST TO DELAY SSOD'S CONSIDERATION OF CURRENT ARMS CONTROL ISSUES. IN REVIEWING CURRENT TACTICAL SITUATION, THIS MEMBER ALSO NOTED RELATIVELY GOOD POSITION OF WESTERN GROUP, IN LIGHT OF FORTHCOMING AND COOPERATIVE ATTITUDE TAKEN BY ITS MEMBERS AND YUGOSLAV EFFORTS TO STEER NONALIGNED INTO MODERATE AND REALISTIC DIRECTIONS WERE ALSO HELPFUL. SOVIETS REMAINED MIREN IN THEIR UNPOPULAR POSITION, LINKING THE SSOD WITH CONVENING OF A WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE. THUS, THERE WERE A WIDE RANGE OF POSSIBILITIES FOR WESTERN PARTICIPANTS TO PRESS WESTERN INTERESTS, INCLUDING STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES, REGIONAL ARMS CONTROL INITIATIVES, AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES. IN THEIR PLANNING, WESTERN PARTICIPANTS SHOULD BEAR IN MIND THE SUCCESS ACHIEVED AT THE 7TH SPECIAL SESSION WITH A COMPREHENSIVE CONCEPTUAL APPROACH TO NORTH-SOUTH ECONOMIC QUESTIONS IN AN EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE COOPERATION RATHER THAN CONFRONTATION WITH THE THIRD WORLD. A SIMILAR APPROACH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FOR THE SSOD. IN ADDITION, SPECIFIC ARMS CONTROL ISSUES MIGHT BE ADVANCED BY

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THE SPECIAL SESSION AND OUR PLANNING SHOULD BE LARGE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE SUCH SPECIFIC INITIATIVES.

5. ANOTHER MEMBER FROM US SIDE NOTED POTENTIAL HAZARDS OF SSOD AND ACKNOWLEDGED LINGERING ANXIETY THAT UN PROCESS WILL TAKE OVER MATTERS USG BELIEVES ARE BETTER HANDLED OUTSIDE UN IN BILATERAL OR OTHER FORUMS. HE REPRESENTED CLASS OF ARGUMENTS AGAINST MOVING TOO PRECIPITOUSLY IN SSOD AND THAT GENERALLY POSITIVE WESTERN POSITIONS SHOULD BE TEMPERED WITH SOME CAUTION. EDMONDS NOTED THAT MUCH OF WHAT WAS SAID ALSO REFLECTED UK THINKING ON SPECIAL SESSION, INCLUDING QUESTION OF HOW POSITIVE OR HOW CAUTIOUS TO BE.

6. EDMONDS NOTED THAT THE SOVIETS APPEARED TO BE PLEADING FOR A "LET'S GET TOGETHER" APPROACH, BUT UK WAS HOLDING USSR AT ARMS LENGTH AND WAS HOPING FOR EVOLUTION OF GREATER DEGREE OF WESTERN COHESION ON SSOD. UK BELIEVED WESTERN COUNTRIES SHOULD DEVELOP JOINT APPROACH NOT ONLY TOWARD NONALIGNED BUT ALSO TOWARD SOVIETS.

7. US SIDE REPORTED ON RECENT DEVELOPMENTS AT UN, REVIEW-
ING NASCENT TENSIONS WITHIN NONALIGNED GROUP. THOUGH
AGREED ON SOME PROCEDURAL ISSUES SUCH AS THE PREPCOM BUREAU
AND ITS DECISION-MAKING PROCEDURES, NONALIGNED WERE FACING
EARLY TROUBLES ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES AS RAISED INITIALLY IN
YUGOSLAV PAPER. MEXICO AND INDIA HAD CRITICIZED MANY ELE-
MENTS OF THE PAPER, AND EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A COMMON STAND
IN ADVANCE OF THE APRIL NAC MINISTERIAL MEETING IN NEW
DELHI WERE NOT PROCEEDING VERY WELL. EARLY YUGOSLAV
EFFORTS TO PROMOTE CREATION OF THREE SUBCOMMITTEES HAD ALSO

FOUNDERED IN LIGHT OF NONALIGNED AND SOVIET-BLOC OPPOSI-
TION. FIRST PREPCOM WAS UNLIKELY TO DO MORE THAN DECIDE IN
PRINCIPLE TO CREATE ANY NEEDED WORKING GROUPS AT AN APPRO-
PRIATE STAGE. US NOTED THAT RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH SWEDES
REVEALED THEIR PREFERENCE FOR A SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE.
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8. ON DECISION-MAKING, NONALIGNED ARE FIRMLY IN ACCORD IN
OPPOSING A CONSENSUS RULE AND IN INSISTING ON RECOGNITION
OF THE POSSIBILITY OF VOTING. AT THE SAME TIME, THEY ARE
APPARENTLY PREPARED TO AGREE TO A STATEMENT PLEDGING
EFFORTS TO REACH COMMON AGREEMENT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE.
THE SOVIETS, WHILE PROFESSING A HARD LINE IN FAVOR OF CON-
SENSUS, APPEAR PREPARED TO SETTLE FOR A COMPROMISE THAT
WOULD PLACE A POLITICAL BURDEN ON RECOURSE TO VOTING, WITH-
OUT RULING IT OUT ALTOGETHER. MOST DELS AT THE UN HOPE AND
EXPECT THAT A COMPROMISE WILL BE FOUND AT THE FIRST PREPCOM
MEETING.

9. IN GENERAL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF PRE-
PARATORY PROCESS, IT WAS BROUGHT OUT THAT:

-- SOVIETS REMAIN UNHAPPY NOT ONLY OVER THE EASTERN GROUP'
ALLOCATION OF PREPCOM SEATS, BUT ALSO OVER NONALIGNED AND
WESTERN PREFERENCE FOR A 5-MAN BUREAU. SOVIETS ARE STILL
CALLING FOR A 10-MAN BUREAU IN ORDER TO ENSURE ONE WARSAW
PACT REPRESENTATIVE.

-- EC-9 HAVE AGREED TO FAVOR 5-MAN BUREAU AND TO SUPPORT
NORWAY AS WEST EUROPEAN REPRESENTATIVE. IF BUREAU IS EN-
LARGED, HOWEVER, EC-9 WOULD PROBABLY PROPOSE FRG AND WOULD
RECONSIDER SUPPORT FOR NORWAY IF NEUTRAL MEMBERS OF GROUP
PROTESTED HAVING TWO NATO COUNTRIES ON BUREAU. EC-9
HAVE ALSO DECIDED TO SUPPORT ARGENTINE AMB. ORTIZ DE ROZAS
AS PREPCOM CHAIRMAN.

-- WHILE THERE IS SOME DISQUIET OVER EARLY (APRIL 15)

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF GOVERNMENTAL VIEWS TO SYG AND QUICK SUBSEQUENT MEETING OF PREPCOM (MAY 9-20), DELAYS DO NOT SEEM POSSIBLE IN VIEW OF SCHEDULING OF LAW OF THE SEA CONFERENCE (BEGINNING MAY 23) AND OTHERS LATER IN YEAR.

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--- BRITISH PLAN TO BE REPRESENTED AT MARCH MEETING OF PREPCOM BY OFFICERS AT THE UK MISSION TO THE UN. AT MAY MEETING, UK DEL MIGHT BE HEADED BY AMB. DEREK ASH FROM GENEVA. BRITISH FORESEE ATTENDANCE BY THEIR FOREIGN SECRETARY AT SESSION ITSELF. US SIDE EXPECTED TO BE REPRESENTED BY USUN AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE LEONARD, WITH USUN OFFICERS AND ONE OR TWO FROM DEPARTMENT AT WORKING LEVEL.

-- UK NOTED THAT SWEDES WERE DEVOTING SPECIAL ATTENTION TO THE ASSERTED LINK BETWEEN DISARMAMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, AND MAY TRY TO WORK WITH THE NON-ALIGNED ON THIS ISSUE, WHICH COULD BE ONE OF THE MOST PROMINENT--AND DIFFICULT--PROBLEMS DEALT WITH AT THE SESSION.

10. THE BRITISH ALSO RAISED WHAT COULD BE MAJOR STICKING POINT IN SPECIAL SESSION, WHICH IS DEPTH OF THE SOVIET LINKAGE OF THE SSOD WITH THEIR WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE IDEA (WDC). THE SOVIETS SEEM TO BE RISKING HUMILIATION IF THEY CONTINUE TO INSIST ON A STRONG LINKAGE DESPITE WIDESPREAD OPPOSITION; BUT UNTIL THEY DESIST, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT FOR WEST TO COOPERATE WITH THEM.

11. THE US SUGGESTED THREE APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM: FIRST, WEST COULD HINGE ITS POSSIBLE FUTURE ACCEPTANCE OF A WORLD DISARMAMENT CONFERENCE ON SOVIET COOPERATION IN THE SSOD, WITH STIPULATION THAT THE USSR MUST FOCUS ON ITEMS WHICH CAN BE HANDLED IN THE SPECIAL SESSION. SECOND, WEST MUST MAKE CERTAIN IT IS NOT ROPED INTO "HOPELESS" SITUATION VIS-A-VIS SSOD BY SOVIET INTRANSIGENCE ON WDC LINKAGE. THIRD, WE MAY HAVE TO ACQUIESCE IN LANGUAGE REFERRING TO THE WDC IN THE FINAL ACTS OF THE SESSION. IT WILL BE IMPORTANT, WHEN THIS COMES UP, NOT TO LET PROPOSED LANGUAGE INHIBIT PROGRESS TOWARD AGREEMENT ON THE PART OF THE WEST. WE COULD THEN BE ACCUSED BY NON-ALIGNED OF OUR OWN BRAND OF INTRANSIGENCE. IT WILL THEREFORE ALSO BE IMPORTANT TO WATCH FOR CHANGES IN MOOD OF NON-ALIGNED TOWARD WDC, WHEN

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AND IF THEY SEE SPECIAL SESSION DISINTEGRATING BECAUSE OF

SOVIET POSITION.

12. BRITISH EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THESE COMMENTS
AND OVERALL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS. BOTH SIDES AGREED TO REMAIN
IN CLOSE CONTACT, PARTICULARLY IN NEW YORK, AS PREPARATIONS
PROCEED.
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